

# Our Lady Help of Christian Parish

25th December, 2020

480a Gilles Street North

PO Box 912, Wendouree 3355

Wendouree 3355

Phone: 5339 2302

Email: [wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au)

School Web: [www.olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au)



## Focus on the Scriptures Christmas Day

The proclamation of good news is dramatically portrayed in this reading which sketches a messenger running swiftly over the mountains with the proclamation of peace and salvation. The focus on feet highlights speed and determination. The people to whom the messenger runs were waiting for a ray of hope. The message is one of peace and salvation. What the people longed to see now unfolds before their eyes. Its joyful effect indicates that the coming of the runner is itself a message to be proclaimed. Just as the messenger heralds peace and salvation to Zion, so the deliverance of the city heralds the mighty power of God to the ends of the earth.

The psalm is an enthronement psalm, praising God as king over all. God is depicted as a warrior whose right hand and outstretched arm brought victory. The focus is on the particularity of Israel's salvation by God. The demonstration of God's righteousness is really vindication meted out in order to rectify a previous injustice. God's act of salvation was prompted by God's remembrance of the earlier covenant promises made to the house of Israel. It was because of the promise made to the ancestors that the divine warrior stepped in and triumphed over Israel's enemies. The divine triumph revealed to all the nations is the reason for the psalmist's call to praise God in song.

Christ is celebrated as the agent of revelation, creation and salvation. In the past God spoke to the ancestors through the prophets, while in the present God speaks a definitive word through God's own Son. This Son is the heir of all things, the agent through whom the world was made and through whom it continues to be sustained. Since God created through Wisdom (Pro 8:22-31; Wis 9:9), and Wisdom is the pure emanation of the glory of God (Wis 7:25-26), the line between Wisdom as creation of God and as an attribute of God cannot always be clearly detected. This very ambiguity lends itself to Christological interpretation. Jesus, the Son of God, is the Wisdom through whom all things came to be and remain.

Dianne Bergant CSA



**Response:** (R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Alleluia, Alleluia. A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord. Today a great light has come upon the earth. Alleluia!

*Wishing you a Joyful  
Christmas Season*

*Many blessings to you and your family  
as we remember and rejoice  
in our Savior's birth*

*Fr Marcello, Maree and Judith would like to wish you a very blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you to the many wonderful parishioners who have continued to support us during the usual and difficult year we have all experienced. We pray that 2021 will be a year of blessings for you and your family.*



## THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD (CHRISTMAS) DAY

**First Reading** Is 52:7-10 A reading from the prophet Isaiah

All the ends of the earth shall see the saving power of our God. How beautiful on the mountains, are the feet of one who brings good news, who heralds peace, brings happiness, proclaims salvation, and tells Zion, 'Your God is king!' Listen! Your watchmen raise their voices, they shout for joy together, for they see the Lord face to face, as he returns to Zion. Break into shouts of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the Lord is consoling his people, redeeming Jerusalem.

The Lord bares his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 97:1-6. R. v.3

(R.) All the ends of the earth have seen the saving power of God.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord

for he has worked wonders.

His right hand and his holy arm

have brought salvation. (R.)

2. The Lord has made known his salvation;

has shown his justice to the nations.

He has remembered his truth and love

for the house of Israel. (R.)

3. All the ends of the earth have seen

the salvation of our God.

Shout to the Lord all the earth,

ring out your joy. (R.)

4. Sing psalms to the Lord with the harp,

with the sound of music.

With trumpets and the sound of the horn

acclaim the King, the Lord. (R.)

**Second Reading** Heb 1:1-6 A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

In our own time, God speaks to us through his Son. At various times in the past and in various different ways, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son, the Son that he has appointed to inherit everything and through whom he made everything there is. He is the radiant light of God's glory and the perfect copy of his nature, sustaining the universe by his powerful command; and now that he has destroyed the defilement of sin, he has gone to take his place in heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty. So he is now as far above the angels as the title which he has inherited is higher than their own name.

God has never said to any angel: You are my Son, today I have become your father, or: I will be a father to him and he a son to me. Again, when he brings the First-born into the world, he says: Let all the angels of God worship him.



**Gospel** Jn 1:1-5, 9-14 A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came to be, not one thing had its being but through him. All that came to be had life in him and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower. The Word was the true light that enlightens all men; and he was coming into the world. He was in the world that had its being through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own domain and his own people did not accept him. But to all who did accept him he gave power to become children of God, to all who believe in the name of him who was born not out of human stock or urge of the flesh or will of man but of God himself. The Word was made flesh, he lived among us. And we saw his glory, the glory that is his as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth.

The Gospel of the Lord

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**Parish Office** Please note that the Parish Offices will be closed from December 23rd at 12noon until Wednesday 20th January at 9am. Emails and the telephone answer phone will be checked and cleared regularly. For any urgent matters please call Fr Marcello at the Presbytery—phone 5332 4324.

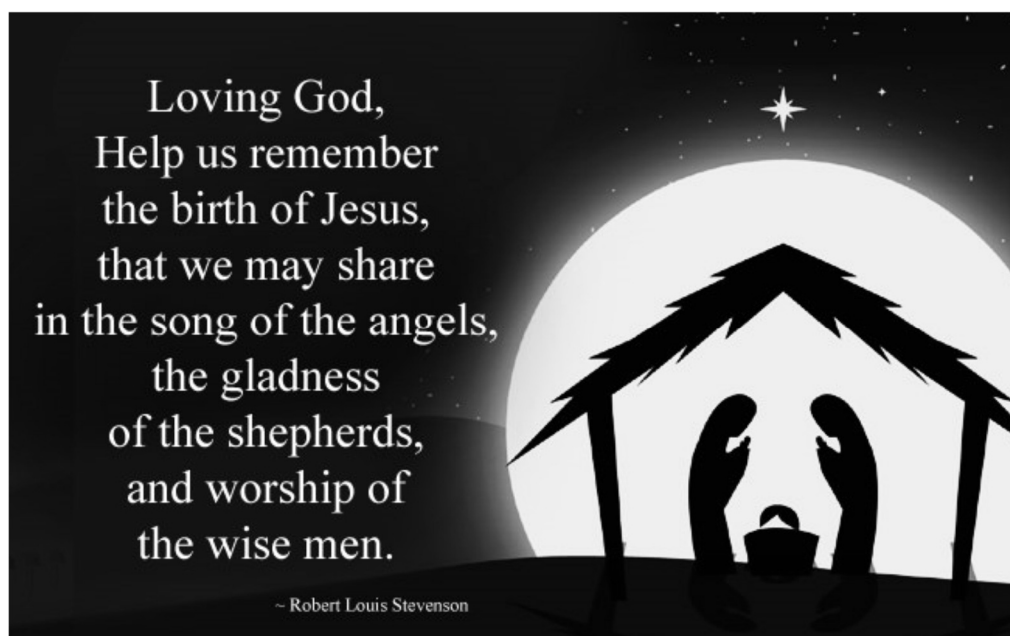
**Weekday Masses** will continue during January, please check the weekly bulletin for any changes to the usual schedule.

**Advertisers** We take this opportunity to thank our advertisers for their ongoing support of the Parishes. We encourage you to use their products and/or services during the year.

**Notice sheets & rosters** Over January please be step up for a Ministry. There are no prepared rosters. If you are at Mass and can help, please do so. Ministries that will need attention will be: Commentary & Prayers, Reading and cleaning after Mass. There will be shorter notice sheets in the foyer for each weekend over the holiday period. The first full notice sheet will be published on 23/24 January.

**Preregistering for Masses** will not be necessary during January. Please tick your name off on the sheet in the foyer. If your name is not on the list kindly add your name and a contact number. Remember to also use the QR code when you enter the Church. Uploading the Service Victoria App before you arrive at Mass would speed up the process.

**Readings and Prayers for January** will be uploaded to the St Columba's website



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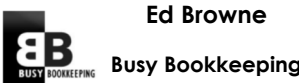
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**Child Safe Church** The Parishes of St Columba's & Our Lady Help of Christians (including Learmonth, Lexton, Miners Rest and Waubra) follow the Child Safe Standards outlined by the Victorian Government and we also implement procedures and standards as directed by the Ballarat Diocesan Office. You can download our Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy from the Parish website or on the foyer notice board. If you have any concerns whatsoever—please contact the Parish Office, Fr. Marcello or one of the Safe Guarding Officers at ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au or wendouree@ballarat.catholic.org.au

### COVID Safe Plan

If you are feeling unwell or have any symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or sore throat) **please do not attend Mass.**

Please register with the Parish Office during office hours to attend a weekend Mass. You do not need to preregister for a weekday Mass. Please ensure you arrive 10 minutes before Mass; doors will be locked prior to commencement. Contact tracing is required for all Masses.

Ensure that you maintain appropriate physical distancing at all times (1.5 metres).

A face mask is optional whilst visiting the Church (your face mask may be removed when consuming Communion or reading, but must be worn again immediately afterwards).

Please use the hand sanitiser available upon entering the Church.

Please do not touch any surfaces unnecessarily.

Please remain in the designated area of the Church (in or near your seat at all times).

Once Mass has concluded, please leave the Church immediately afterwards to allow for cleaning of all surfaces.

We appreciate your assistance. The fines for non-compliance with Government Regulations may be imposed on the Parish are up to \$100,000.